CHILDREN'S BOOK
COLLECTION

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LOS ANGELES

AN

ASTRONOMICAL

AND

GEOGRAPHICAL

CATECHISM.

For the Use of Children.

BOSTON:
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1795.

AN

Aſtronomical & Geographical

CATECHISM.

Queſt. WHAT does aſtronomy treat of?

Anſ. Aſtronomy treats of the ſun, ſtars, planets, comets, and other heavenly bodies.

Q. Who firſt attended to this ſcience?

A. The Shepherds, on the plains of Egypt and Babylon.

Q. How many primary planets are there?

A. Seven, which revolve round the Sun in the following order;

Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and Herſchel.

Q. What is the diameter of the Sun.

A. Eight hundred and ninety thouſand Engliſh miles.

Q. What is its diſtance from the Earth ?

A. Ninety five million miles.

Q. What is the diſtance of Herſchel from the Sun ?

A. Eighteen hundred million miles.

Q. In what time is the revolution of Herſchel performed ?

A. In eighty-two years.

Q. In what time is the revolution of the Earth performed ?

A. In one year, or 365 days, 5 hours, 48 minutes, 57 ſeconds.

Q. How many ſecondary planets, or moons, are there ?

A. Fourteen. The Earth has one, Jupiter four, Saturn ſeven, and Herſchel two.

Q. What are the motions of the planets called ?

A. Their motion round the Sun is called their *annual* motion, and that upon their own axis is called their *diurnal* motion.

Q. What are comets ?

A. Comets are large, opake bodies, which move in very eliptical orbits, and in all poſſible directions ; having long, fiery, tranſparent tails. Some appear no bigger than ſtars, others as big as the moon.

Q. How many comets are there in our ſyſtem ?

A. It is not known. Twenty-one have been ſeen, and the periods of three have been determined.

Q. What is meant by the ſolar ſyſtem ?

A. The ſeven planets, with their fourteen ſatellites or moons, make the ſolar ſyſtem, which is ſometimes called the Copernican ſyſtem.

Q. What do you ſuppoſe the fixed ſtars are ?

A. I ſuppoſe they are ſuns to oth-

er worlds, as they ſhine with their own light.

Q. What is their diſtance from the Earth ?

A. It is not certainly known. It is ſuppoſed, however, they are, at leaſt, a hundred thouſand times farther from it than the Sun is.

Q. How long would it take a cannon ball to reach them ?

A. Seven hundred thouſand years.

Q. What is the number of ſtars diſcernible by the help of a teleſcope.

A. About three thouſand.

Q. Is the Earth perfectly round ?

A. No. It is about thirty miles further through the equator, than it is from pole to pole.

Q. What is the circumference of the Earth ?

A. Twenty-five thouſand and thirty-eight miles.

Q. What is its diameter ?

A. Seven thouſand nine hundred and ſeventy miles.

Q. What reaſons have you to ſuppoſe the Earth to be round?

A. 1. This ſhape is beſt adapted to motion. 2. From the appearance of its ſhadow in eclipſes of the moon. 3. From analogy; all other planets being round. 4. From its having been circumnavigated many times.

Q. Who firſt ſailed round the world?

A. Magellan; and, after him, Francis Drake, Thomas Cavendiſh, Lord Anſon, Captain Cook, & others.

Q. What is an artificial globe?

A. A round body, on which all parts of the Earth are repreſented.

Q. What is the axis of the Earth?

A. An imaginary line, paſſing through the centre of the Earth, from north to ſouth, the ends of which are called the poles.

Q. How many great circles are there?

A. Six; the equator, the meridi-

er worlds, as they ſhine with their own light.

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hemiſpheres. When the Sun is riſing and ſetting, he is in the horizon.

Q. What are the colures?

A. They divide the globe into four equal parts, paſſing through the points Aries, and Libra, Cancer and Capricorn.

Q. What are the tropics?

A. They are two circles drawn parallel to the equator, at the diſtance of 23° 30′ on each ſide of it.

Q. What are the polar circles?

A. They are drawn 23° 30′ from the poles. The northern is called the *arctic*, and the ſouthern the *antarctic* circle.

Q. How many zones are there?

A. Five; one torrid, two temperate, and two frigid zones.

Q. What is meant by a climate?

A. It is a tract of the earth, comprehended between two parallels of latitude, at ſuch a diſtance as to make one half hour's difference in the length of the day.

Q. What do you mean by latitude?

A. Latitude is the diſtance of a place from the equator, either north or ſouth.

Q. What is meant by longitude?

A. It is the diſtance from a certain meridian, either eaſt or weſt. The length of a degree diminiſhes as you depart from the equator towards the poles, where it comes to a point.

Q. What do you mean by the atmoſphere?

A. It is the air which we breathe; and it extends about 45 miles in height.

Q. What cauſes the ebbing and flowing of the tide?

A. The attraction of the Sun and Moon; chiefly that of the latter.

Q. What are clouds?

A. Collections of vapours, exhaled from the Earth by the attraction of the Sun or other cauſes.

Q. What cauſes an eclipſe of the Sun?

A. The Moon, when it passes between the Sun and the Earth.

Q. What causes an eclipse of the Moon?

A. The Earth, as it passes between the Sun and the Moon.

Q. How is the Earth divided with respect to land and water?

A. About three fourths of its surface is covered with water, the rest is land.

Q. What is a continent?

A. A large tract of land, comprehending several kingdoms, &c.

Q. How many continents are there?

A. Two, the eastern and western. The eastern continent comprehends Europe, Asia and Africa; the western, North and South America. New Holland begins now to be called a continent by some.

Q. What is an island?

A. A tract of land entirely surrounded by water.

Q. What is a peninsula?

A. It is a tract of land almoſt ſurrounded by water, joined to the main land only by a narrow neck.

Q. What is an iſthmus ?

A. It is that narrow neck of land which joins a peninſula to the main land.

Q. What is a promontory ?

A. It is a high point of land, extending far into the ſea. When it is flat, it is called a cape.

Q. What do you mean by an ocean ?

A. An ocear is a vaſt collection of water, not ſeparated by land, dividing one continent from another.

Q. How many oceans are there ?

A. Five ; the Atlantic, between America and Europe ; the Pacific, between Aſia and America ; the Indian, between Africa and the Eaſt-Indies ; the northern and ſouthern frozen oceans.

Q. What is meant by a lake ?

A. A lake is a large collection of water, entirely ſurrounded by land.

Q. What is a ſea?

A. A ſea or gulf is part of an ocean, ſurrounded by land, excepting a narrow paſs; which paſs is called a ſtrait.

Q. What is a bay?

A. A bay is part of the ſea, extending into the main land, commonly between two capes.

Q. What are rivers?

A. Large ſtreams running into the ſea, originally derived from ſprings. When they are ſmall, they are called brooks, rivulets, rills, &c.

Q. When was America diſcovered, and by whom?

A. In the year 1492, by Chriſtopher Columbus, a native of Genoa, who made four voyages to this continent.

Q. Why was it called America?

A. It was named America in honour of Americus Veſputius, who

ungenerously robbed Columbus of the honour which properly belonged to him.

Q. Whose service was Columbus in, when he made this discovery?

A. In the service of the Court of Spain, who, at first, paid him great honours; but, in the latter part of his life, treated him shamefully.

Q. What is the extent of America?

A. It extends from the north pole to Cape Horn, in 46° south latitude; being nearly ten thousand miles long. Its breadth is not known.

Q. What are the principal rivers of America?

A. The Amazon, La Plata, and Oronoke, in South America: The Mississippi and St. Lawrence in North America.

Q. Which are the principal mountains?

A. The Andes, in South America, are the higheſt mountains in the world, being upwards of twenty-thouſand feet in height. The principal mountains in North America are the Allegany Mountains.

Q. What were the inhabitants of America, when the Europeans diſcovered it?

A. It was peopled by various tribes of ſavages, who ſtill occupy the largeſt part of the continent.

Q. How do you ſuppoſe America was firſt peopled?

A. It is probable it was peopled from the north-eaſt part of Aſia, from which it is divided by a narrow ſtrait only.

Q. What part of North-America was firſt ſettled by Europeans?

A. Quebec, in 1608, by the French.

Q. What part was ſettled next?

A. Virginia, in 1609, by the Engliſh. New-England began to be

ſettled in 1620. Plymouth, in Maſſachuſetts, was the firſt ſpot pitched upon.

Q. How many United States are there, and what are their capital towns?

A. Fifteen, which are,

States.	*Capitals.*
New-Hampſhire	Portſmouth.
Maſſachuſetts	Boſton.
Rhode-Iſland	Newport.
Connecticut	New-haven.
Vermont	Bennington.
New-York	New-York.
New-Jerſey	Trenton.
Pennſylvania	Philadelphia.
Delaware	Dover.
Maryland	Annapolis.
Virginia	Richmond.
Kentucky	Lexington.
North-Carolina	Edenton.
South-Carolina	Charleſton.
Georgia	Auguſta.

Q. What is the ſituation and extent of the United States?

miles.
A. Length 1250 } between { 31° and 46° N. Lat.
Breadth 1040 } { 8° E. & 24° W. Long.

bounded by Canada and the lakes on the north; by the Miſſiſippi on the weſt; by Eaſt and Weſt Florida on the ſouth; by the Atlantic and Nova-Scotia on the ſouth-eaſt and eaſt.

Q. What are the names of the lakes?

A. The principal ones are Lake Superior, Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake Ontario, and many others.

Q. What are the principal rivers in the United States?

A. The Miſſiſippi, the Ohio, the Potowmack, the Hudſon, Connecticut, &c. &c.

Q. Which are the principal bays?

A. The bay or gulf of St. Lawrence, Chebucto bay, Delaware bay, Cheſapeak bay, Maſſachuſetts bay, &c.

Q. What are ſome of the princi-

pal animals of the American woods?

A. The Mammoth, (ſuppoſed by its bones to be one of the largeſt animals in the world; but whether any of them are now living, is uncertain:) the Buffalo, the Tyger, the Panther, the Elke, the Mooſe, the Deer, &c. The Beaver, the Opoſſum, and the Skunk, are curious animals.

Q. What are ſome of the moſt curious birds?

A. The Humming Bird, which is the leaſt of all the feathered tribe; the Whip-poor-will, the Pelican, &c.

Q. Are there any ſerpents in the United States?

A. There are many; the moſt venomous of which is the Rattle-Snake.

Q. What is the number of inhabitants?

A. About four millions.

Q. What is the government of the United States?

A. Republican. The different ſtates are free and independent, confederated under the general government of a preſident, vice preſident, and congreſs.

Q. What power did they belong to, before the late war?

A. To Great-Britain.

Q. What was the occaſion of the war which ſeparated them from that power?

A. The oppreſſive meaſures of the Britiſh government.

Q. When did the war begin, and where?

A. It began in the year 1775, at Lexington, in Maſſachuſetts; and ended in 1782, in honour of the United States, and to the diſgrace of the Britiſh nation.

Q. What ſtates are called New-England States?

A. New-Hampſhire, Maſſachuſetts, Rhode-Iſland, Connecticut, and Vermont.

Q. What is the number of inhabitants in the New-England States?

A. About one million.

Q. What is the face of the country?

A. In general, rough and mountainous.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. Superior, perhaps, to that of any other country in the world. Schools are eſtabliſhed by law, in almoſt all the townſhips.

Q. What is the religion of New-England?

A. The principal ſects are Congregationaliſts, Preſbyterians, Baptiſts, Epiſcopalians, Quakers, &c.

Q. Where does New-Hampſhire lie?

A. It is the moſt northerly of all the ſtates; bounded on the north-eaſt by the province of Maine; on the weſt, by Vermont; and on the ſouth, by Maſſachuſetts.

Q. What is the number of inhabitants?

A. One hundred and forty-one thouſand.

Q. What is the climate, ſoil, &c.?

A. Cold, but healthy. It is mountainous; and in ſome parts, barren.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. In Hanover, there is a college, called Dartmouth-College; and at Exeter, an academy; both in a flouriſhing ſtate.

Q. What ſtate lies next to New-Hampſhire?

A. Maſſachuſetts, containing four hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand inhabitants, divided into ſeventeen counties, and three hundred and ſixty-five townſhips.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. There is a univerſity at Cambridge, and a number of flouriſhing academies in other places.

Q. What is the number of inhabitants, and meeting houſes, in Boſton?

A. About twenty-five thouſand

inhabitants, and eighteen houſes for publick worſhip.

Q. What are the other principal towns?

A. Salem, Newbury-Port, Marblehead, Worceſter, Ipſwich, Glouceſter, Portland, &c.

Q. Where is the Province of Maine?

A. It lies between New-Hampſhire and Nova-Scotia, and belongs to Maſſachuſetts.

Q. What ſtate lies next in order?

A. Rhode-Iſland, ſixty-eight miles by forty, containing ſixty-nine thouſand inhabitants.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. It is chiefly confined to their two capital towns, Newport and Providence, in the latter of which is a college, called Rhode-Iſland College.

Q. What is the next ſtate?

A. Connecticut, eighty-two miles by fifty-seven, containing two hundred and three thousand inhabitants, and five incorporated towns, or cities, viz. New-Haven, Hartford, Middletown, Norwich, and New-London.

Q. What is the state of literature?

A. Very flourishing. In New-Haven is a college, called Yale College; and in several other towns there are academies.

Q. Where is Vermont?

A. It is an inland state, lying between Canada and Massachusetts, containing one hundred thousand inhabitants.

Q. Where is New-York state?

A. It lies to the westward of New-England, containing two hundred and thirty-nine thousand inhabitants.

Q. What cities has it?

A. New-York, Albany, Hudson, Lansingburg, and Troy; the former of which contains about forty thou-

ſand inhabitants, and twenty-two houſes of public worſhip.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. There is a college in New-York city; and they are now making proviſion for public ſchools.

Q. What ſtate lies next?

A. New-Jerſey, containing two hundred thouſand inhabitants.

Q. What is the ſtate of literature?

A. There is a college at Princeton, and ſeveral academies in other parts of the ſtate.

Q. What ſtate is next?

A. Pennſylvania, containing four hundred and thirty-four thouſand inhabitants. Philadelphia contains about ſixty thouſand inhabitants, and twenty ſix houſes of worſhip.

Q. What are their improvements in literature?

A. Very great. There are no leſs than three colleges, beſide many ſchools.

Q. What are the next ſtates?

A. Delaware, a ſmall ſtate; Maryland, containing two hundred and thirteen thouſand inhabitants; Virginia, which is the oldeſt ſtate in the union, containing ſeven hundred and forty-ſeven thouſand inhabitants. It has a univerſity, but not in high repute; and a number of academies.

Q. What are the other four ſtates?

A. North-Carolina, South-Carolina, Georgia and Kentucky. None of them quite ſo celebrated for literature as the other ſtates: Charleſton, however, is not deficient in learning and politeneſs.

Q. What other dominions are there in North-America?

Dominions.	*Capitals.*
A. New-Britain	
Canada	Quebec.
Nova-Scotia	Halifax.
Eaſt & Weſt Florida	St. Auguſtine.
Louiſiana	New-Orleans.
Mexico	Mexico.

Q. What are the dominions of South-America ?

Dominions.	*Capitals.*
A. Terra Firma	Panama.
Peru	Lima.
Amazonia	St. Pedro.
Guiana	Surinam.
Brazil	St. Baſtia.
La Plata	Buenos Ayres.
Chili	St. Jago.
Patagonia	

Theſe belong chiefly to Spain, Portugal, and the natives.

Q. What are the kingdoms of Europe, with their capitals ?

Kingdoms.	*Capitals.*
A. Ruſſia	Peterſburg.
Sweden	Stockholm.
Denmark	Copenhagen.
Poland	Warſaw.
Germany	Vienna.
Pruſſia	Koningſburg.
France	Paris.
Holland	Amſterdam.

Kingdoms.	*Capitals.*
England	London.
Scotland	Edinburgh.
Ireland	Dublin.
Switzerland	Bern.
Italy	Rome.
Portugal	Liſbon.
Spain	Madrid.
Hungary	Preſburg.
Turkey	Conſtantinople.

Q. What are the dimenſions of Europe?

A. 3000 miles by 2500.

Q. What are the dimenſions of Aſia?

A. 4800 miles by 4300.

Q. What are the dominions of Aſia?

Dominions.	*Capitals.*
A. China	Pekin.
Tartary	Tobolſki & Tibet.
Perſia	Iſpahan.
India	Delhi.
Turkey	Jeruſalem.
Arabia	Mecca.

Q. What are the dimenſions of Africa?

A. Four thouſand three hundred miles by three thouſand five hundred.

Q. What are its dominions?

A. Egypt, Barbara, Guinea, Zara, Negroland, Ethiopia, and the Iſlands.

Q. What are the principal iſlands of America?

A. The Weſt-India Iſlands, Cape Breton, Long Iſland, Rhode-Iſland, &c.

Q. What are the principal iſlands of Europe?

A. England, Ireland, Sicily, Sardinia, Majorca, Minorca, &c.

Q. What are the principal iſlands of Aſia?

A. Borneo, Ceylon, Japan, Phillippines, &c.

Q. What are the principal iſlands of Africa?

A. Madagaſcar, Canary Iſles, Comorra Iſles, Cape Verde Iſles, &c.

Q. How many inhabitants is it thought there are in the world?

A. 950 millions.

Q. Which quarter of the globe contains the largeſt number?

A. Aſia contains by far the largeſt number.

Q. How great a part of the inhabitants of the globe are called Chriſtians?

A. Perhaps about one ſeventh.

Q. What are the general diviſions of the Chriſtian religion?

A. Roman Catholicks, Proteſtants, and the Greek church.

Q. How long is it ſince the world was created?

A. Five thouſand ſeven hundred and ninety-three years.

Q. Where is it ſuppoſed the garden of Eden was?

A. In ſome part of Aſia.

Q. Where is Jeruſalem?

A. At the eaſt end of the Mediterranean ſea.

Q. Which are ſome of the moſt populous cities in the world?

A. Nankin, Pekin, London, Paris, Grand Cairo, &c. Nankin is ſaid by ſome to contain four millions of inhabitants, and Pekin two millions.

Q. What are ſome of the principal rivers on the eaſtern continent?

A. The Danube, the Nile, the Rhine, Rhone, Euphrates, Indus, Don, Walga, &c.

Q. What does England abound in, principally?

A. In grain, and in almoſt all kinds of manufactures, eſpecially woollen cloths.

Q. What does France principally abound in?

A. Wines, fruits of various kinds, and manufactures.

Q. What does Spain principally abound in?

A. Gold, ſilver, and fruits.

Q. Which is the moſt direct way from the United States to China?

A. Croſs the Atlantic, double the Cape of Good-Hope, and paſs on through the Indian Ocean.

Q. Which is the direct way to Kamſchatka?

A. Sail down the eaſtern coaſt of South-America, double Cape Horn, or paſs through the ſtraits of Magellan, and then ſteer north-weſt.

Q. Which is the route to Peterſburg in Ruſſia?

A. Croſs the Atlantic, paſs thro' the Engliſh Channel, and then up the Baltic.

Q. Which is the route to Spain, Italy, Conſtantinople, Jeruſalem, Algiers, &c.

A. Croſs the Atlantic, paſs the ſtraits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean ſea, and you may ſail to any of thoſe places.

FINIS.

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